



Work Matters

Maricopa County's Human Services Department

October 2004

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Who's Who Among Executives and Professionals?

Maria Munoz (area coordinator) that's who! Maria was selected among many applicants to represent the city of Mesa in the national publication "Who's Who Among Executives and Professionals." Maria was chosen for her many recent accomplishments. In May of 2004 Maria received her Masters of Education in Leadership. She completed a city of Mesa leadership training and development program whose purpose was to cultivate leadership through education and exposure to the community. If that weren't enough to land her the appointment, Maria was a member of the first graduating class of the Executive Development Opportunities for Governmental Employees (EDGE) program. The purpose of the program was to enhance the performance of Maricopa County's leaders.

With her recent involvement in many different leadership opportunities, Maria was an obvious choice for the city of Mesa to select as a candidate to represent Mesa in the "Who's Who Among Executives and Professionals," as well as to be included in the 2004/2005 "Honors Edition." ■



Maria Munoz

Important Notice – Leave Plan / Pre-Holiday Pay

The Maricopa County Leave Plan (Section (VIII)(E)) states that appointing authorities may permit classified and unclassified (excluding temporary employees) employees to take "up to eight hours of "pre-holiday" administrative leave with pay on the work days prior to December 25th and January 1st without deduction of personal or family/medical leave."

Section (VIII)(E)(1) states that the use of pre-holiday leave is available only when December 24 and December 31 are scheduled workdays for the employee. This year, December 24 and January 1 are the scheduled Christmas and New Year's holidays and not scheduled workdays for most employees. Therefore, pre-holiday leave will not be available for the 2004 holiday season.

For employees whose regularly scheduled workdays are December 24 or December 31, pre-holiday benefits will be available if permitted by the appointed authority. These employees typically hold positions in 24/7 operations. ■

Chicken for Charity

Our fearless leaders have agreed to support the Combined Charitable Campaign by participating in a unique fund-raising contest. Proving that they're not chicken, Mark Braunhut, Mark Bustamante, Trish Georgeff, Barbara Hill, Trina Jenkins, Marge Leyvas, Susan Schmidt, Annette Stein, and Vi Todd have all agreed to participate in the Chicken for Charity contest. From now until mid-November, HSD staff has the opportunity to vote for the leader of their choice by submitting a monetary donation in that leader's name. The leader who collects the most money wins the contest and the honor of parading around in a large, bright yellow chicken suit for the day.



Monetary donations are being collected by Diane Hilow at 234 N. Central. Please do not send cash via interoffice mail. Vote now and vote often! ■

Announcing Open Enrollment

The annual benefits open enrollment will be from October 14 through November 8, 2004. This will be the only opportunity next year for employees to change benefits, modify coverage or add new coverage. Details will be forthcoming on the changes in the plans and the costs for next year.

Open enrollment will be conducted electronically; the website will be accessible from any computer that has Internet access.

As always, employees will be able to change their benefits when there is a change in family status (marriage, divorce, new baby, adoption, death, etc.) ■

Workforce Partnership Awards Breakfast Features Founder of Monster.com

Hiring and retaining quality employees can be a monstrous task. That's why the Maricopa Workforce Connections and Phoenix Workforce Connection have invited Jeff Taylor, founder of monster.com and a recognized innovator and visionary in both the internet and career industries, to be the keynote speaker at the sixth annual Workforce Partnership Awards Breakfast 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 19, at the Phoenix Airport Marriott.



Taylor will offer his expertise on recruiting, employee retention, innovation and the future of human capital. He will share his story of taking a 1,200-employee company and making it one of the strongest and most well-known Internet brands in the world.

The breakfast will recognize two local employers for their exceptional support of the programs and services provided by Maricopa Workforce Connections and Phoenix Workforce Connection, the sponsors of the awards breakfast. ■

Jeannie Jertson Retires

Maricopa County Human Services Department bids farewell to a true visionary in the field of human services. After 31 years in public service Jeannie Jertson retired. Jeannie dedicated her career in public service to serving low-income families and children and was a tireless advocate for the poor.

Jeannie came to the Maricopa County Human Services Department in April 1997 as the assistant director of the Community Services Division.

Jeannie's professional achievements, while outstanding, are only part of her success.

Jeannie's passion benefited low-income families in Maricopa County and across the state. Jeannie's commitment to helping those in need was unmistakable. While Jeannie will be missed, the Human Services Department is excited for her as she enters a new phase in her life. One thing is certain, Jeannie's retirement will be as fantastic as her career! ■



Beat the Bounce, Learn New Checking Rules

New federal banking rules will affect just about everyone with a checkbook. Bankers and consumer groups agree that the so-called Check 21 regulations will usher in a new era, but they are sharply divided on whether the changes will help or hurt customers. This act will go into place on Oct. 28, though not all banks will change their methodology right away. The law does not mandate electronic clearing; it simply makes it possible. Many banks do not have the technology to clear checks electronically, and they may choose to clear checks using the current method.

Check 21 - short for the Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act - will eliminate check-clearing delays caused by such things as severe weather and terrorism. However, consumer groups worry that it will lead to many more bank customers' bouncing checks.

Check 21 is a financial modernization act that was passed after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The primary change is that banks will be able to transmit and clear checks by electronic facsimile. Under current rules, checks must be physically transported to the banks that issued them to be cleared for payment. The disruption of commercial aviation after the terror attacks helped provide the impetus for the new law.

Customers will be affected in several ways by this new act. Banks will no longer be required to return the original checks to customers. They can return photo images of the checks instead.

More importantly, checks will clear much faster - sometimes in a matter of hours.

This will effectively eliminate the "float" time, or the informal grace period of a day or more that now exists between the time a check is written and the time the funds are actually withdrawn. Consumer advocates say this change could result in millions of bounced checks.



We are adults, right, so shouldn't everyone know that you can't write checks against money you don't have in your account? True, but consumer activists point out that just as check writers have floats, banks have their own benefit known as deposit "holds." Under certain circumstances, banks are allowed to place holds on deposited funds. If this happens to a bank customer, money he thought he had in his account to cover his checks may not be available for days - sometimes longer. It is possible that you could deposit a check and write a check on the same day. The one you write could clear and the one you deposited would not, causing you to bounce a check when you had the funds in your account.

Regulation CC allows banks to hold local checks - those issued by banks in the same metropolitan area where they are deposited - for as long as two days. Out-of-town checks can be held for at most five days. However, large checks (those for \$5,000 or more), checks drawn on new accounts and

those drawn on accounts that are consistently overdrawn can be held longer - for as long as 30 days.

In theory, a bank could bounce your checks, and charge overdraft fees, when you actually have the money in your account. Although it is unlikely that a bank would be slow to credit customers for their deposits, because those banks would lose customers to banks that are more accommodating.

For those of you who use your returned checks to substantiate your tax returns, banks will issue "substitute checks", they will have the same legal standing as canceled checks. That means these check images must be accepted by courts and tax authorities as proof of payment. Notably, because banks are adding imaging systems to accommodate the new law, they are likely to provide check images online too. That would allow bank customers to view and print check copies at any time. Original checks will most likely be destroyed.

In the event that someone forges or changes a check, Check 21 is actually an improvement of the previous law. It is an improvement in that under current law, if a customer says he has been a victim of check forgery - or even a costly bank error - the bank is not obligated to credit his account until the bank's investigation has been completed. Under Check 21, the bank must prove within 10 days that it didn't make the error. After that, the customer must be credited with the disputed amount, even if the bank's investigation is incomplete. There is also a "right of indemnity" under the law that says that if the reason you couldn't prove a check was forged was that the original was unavailable, you get the money back. ■

People On the Move

New Faces

- Katrina Wister - Teacher's Aide
- Terri Jaime - Teacher's Aide
- Veronica Jimenez - Case Manager
- Valerie Rockwell - Family Case Specialist
- Lisa Hunt - Teacher
- Frank Piazza - Driver

The Human Services Department is currently recruiting for the following positions:

- Business Operations Specialist
- Data Entry Operator
- Career Guidance Specialist
- Performance Analyst
- Programming Coordinator

Who is Jody Ryan?

Jody has been working for the Workforce Development Division for the last two years. She started with MWC as a business workforce specialist (BWS) in the Peoria Career Development Center. As a BWS, Jody was responsible for educating the business community about the services offered to them as well as those offered to job seeking clients.



Currently, Jody serves as the board liaison to the Maricopa Workforce Connections Workforce Development Board. The MWC, Inc. is an advisory board to the county's workforce development programs as well as to all the local partners who work in the career development centers. The board is composed of representatives from the county's career development centers as well as representatives from private companies in the community.

Jody received her B.S. in Journalism and Mass Communications from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). After graduating from UNL, she moved to Washington, D.C. and spent three years working on Capitol Hill and two years at a public affairs firm.

In her free time Jody loves to travel and see old friends! She also love to run, and enjoys eating spicy food! ■